

ArtHealthy brings out festival-goers of all ages

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By Billy Hobbs



Hundreds of people attended the 11th annual ArtHealthy Festival in downtown Milledgeville Saturday. The event focuses on movement — moving the body in different ways to stay healthy. It was also a time for families to spend quality time together. It was put on by CREATE, Inc. and spearheaded by Gregory and Toyia Barnes. One of the families that attended the festival included Bruce Chatman and his wife, Patricia Chatman, who showed off her 1972 Chevrolet Impala, which was gifted to her as a surprise by her husband. They were joined by their grandsons, Jaquez Rozier, 22, a senior at Clayton State University, and his brother, Jalen Rozier, 25, an IT specialist at Baldwin State Prison. (Billy W. Hobbs/Staff)

The 12th annual ArtHealthy Festival drew crowds of people, young and old alike, to the front campus of Georgia College & State University.

The festival was sponsored by CREATE, Inc. and held in conjunction with partnerships with GCSU and The Union-Recorder.

Toyia Barnes and her husband, Gregory Barnes, co-founders of CREATE, Inc., started the festival in 2007 and work all year to prepare for it every spring.

The festival brings college students and residents together in a special way to promote both art and healthy living in Milledgeville and Baldwin County, as well as those who visit from surrounding counties.

This year's ArtHealthy Festival was all about body movement and dance and included tai chi, which drew lots of participants.

A community blood drive, coordinated through the American Red Cross, was also held during the festival hours. Several pints of blood were donated for the cause of saving lives.

The event also included free health checkups from both public and private sector businesses and organizations.

Information on prostate examinations, which detect for prostate cancer, were provided by GCSU's The Center for Health and Social Issues.

C.J. Ford, a senior at Baldwin High School said he enjoyed seeing the classic cars at the festival.

"I like old cars," Ford said.

One of them was a 1972 Chevrolet Impala owned by Patricia Chatman of Milledgeville. Her husband, Bruce, presented it to her as a surprise one day.

He purchased the car from someone else who had completely restored it.

"The only thing I did to it was to have it painted for my wife," Bruce Chatman said.

Several GCSU nursing students spoke with famed fire dog, Sparky, about ways to prevent fires. Sparky, who is with Milledgeville Fire Rescue Services, posed for a group picture with the nursing students and a firefighter.

Isabella Lopez and Carlos Blackwell, both seniors at GCSU, tried their hand at swinging a large mallet to ring a bell as a way of testing their strength.

The Barneses said they appreciated everyone's attendance, and they are already looking forward to next year's event.